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This Week.

The Message of Flowers in Winter

IF CHRIST WERE HERE TO-NIGHT.

A VAST ENTERPRISE.

THE UNTIMELINESS OF FEDERATION.

MODERN MYSTICISM.

A HOUSE PARTY OF PREACHERS.

ASSEMBLY'S HOME AND SCHOOL.

TASTE AND SEE.

CONDITIONS IN MEXICO.

The flowers that come in the winter are especially welcome. A thoughtful, generous friend has sent to our table a vase of cut flowers, tulips and jonquils and giant mignonettes, that have been lovely and fill the room with their light and fragrance. The florist has kept his plants under glass, and warmed them by steam every night, and watered them every morning, and the sun came and did all it could to cheer and help them. And these great and beautiful blooms were worthy of all the care and labor. It helps us to bear the cold of the season, and to be patient when the out-door world is no longer green and inviting.

Messages of cheer and hope are like the flowers in winter, in all our times of sickness, or of sorrow. It is a kind and thoughtful thing to give of your time a visit to the invalid or the bereaved. One of the very best things we ever give to others is a letter of real sympathy. How it blooms and makes fragrant the darkened home where loss or sorrow has come. The lines of affection and cheer reach the heart, and soften it into submission and patience. A society of kindhearted people has found a generous and blessed work in letter-writing to the shut-ins. The friends of the seamen put in their comfort-bags a letter to the sailor, to be read again and again in his lonely hours far away on the great waters, with words of guidance and counsel, and biddings of love "for those in peril on the sea."

What a great and precious letter to the shut-ins is the Word of God. It is an inexhaustible library of portions of comfort and consolation. How marvelously gracious it is that God has adapted his wonderful book to those who are possibly forgotten by the world. The God of all comfort knows how to reach the heart; and to provide the truth and the promises, on which can be based with a perfect confidence the consolations and hopes that brighten the hearts and lives of many who are troubled and downcast. There are so many who are invalids, so many in the decline of old age, so many that are blind, so many without human friends; the sailor far away from home, the prisoner in the solitude of his cell, as well as the widow and the orphan. Not one has been forgotten by the Father in heaven.

The Day of Prayer for Colleges and Seminaries, appointed by the General Assembly, is Thursday of this week, Feb. 22. This is an

annual appointment that should not be forgotten. It has a great reason in the value to the church and to the world of youth to whom have come opportunities of education. The observance of the day is naturally most marked about the institutions themselves, and has often been most profitable to the young people. Elsewhere many of our churches use their Wednesday night meeting for this purpose.

The Rev. Wm. Lee Harrell, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Monticello, Ga., was killed by accident while hunting with a friend, on Friday, Feb. 15. Mr. Harrell was born in Robeson county, N. C., in 1866. He graduated at Hampden-Sidney College in 1889 and at Union Theological Seminary in 1892. He has served in the ministry at Rome, Ga., and elsewhere, and later at Tucooa, and Monticello and Crawfordsville. About forty years years of age, in the prime of manhood and ministry, he has been suddenly called away from his home and his ministry. His family and the people of his charge will have the sincere sympathy of many friends throughout the church.

The visit to Richmond of the Rev. Dr. James D. Moffett, President of Washington and Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, and Moderator of the General Assembly, North, has given much satisfaction to our ministers and churches. Dr. Moffett preached on Sunday morning, the 18th inst., in the First church, in the Second church at night, and in the afternoon, filling the engagement which brought him to Richmond at this time, he preached at the Y. M. C. A. meeting for men in the Academy of Music. On Monday morning he visited Union Theological Seminary and addressed the students. At 11 A. M. he was present at the Ministers' Meeting in the Chapel of the Publication House, and made a most striking and suitable talk, the meeting responding in a resolution of gratification and appreciation. In the afternoon a reception was tendered Dr. Moffett in the parlors of the Jefferson Hotel by the ministers of the city and their wives. This is the kind of "closer relations" which we deem the most safe and profitable.

The adaptation of methods to conditions and opportunities in the churches is an important matter. The same thing cannot be done with success in all fields. There is everywhere the need of an intelligent zeal in doing what can be done to build up Christian knowledge and character. Some country churches are using with fine effect the Home Department study of the Sunday-school Lesson. Some village and town churches are using the second service on Sunday for congregational Bible Class work. Some ministers are successful with the pastor's Bible Class on a week day afternoon. It is a wise thing to find what is best adapted to each field. And it is not a mistake sometimes to change from one method to another.

What is called the Inter-Church Conference on Marriage and Divorce, in which thirteen of the stronger religious bodies are combined, is seeking to secure uniform legislation on marriage and divorce. The Conference meeting in Washington a year ago was received by President Roosevelt on Jan. 26, 1905, and a few days after, Jan. 30, the President sent a message to Congress asking for co-operation among the States for such uniform legislation. Commissioners from the States are to meet in Washington this week at the new Willard Hotel. An address and appeal have been issued to the Christian public by a committee, of which Bishop Doane, of Albany, is chairman, and Dr. W. H. Roberts is secretary.

In last week's *British Weekly*, "Claudius Clear," who is Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll, the editor, writes on exports and imports. Taking his text from the political discussion going on in Great Britain, on Protection and Free Trade, and the much talked of relations of imports and exports, he says that in our mental life, we must be careful to make our imports quite equal to our exports, our acquisition equal to that we give out. Youth is specially the time for imports, and early exports are not desirable, and often not valuable. Ministers, editors, authors, public men need importation all their lives, the constant growth in knowledge, in range of vision and in trained abilities. The wearing out and failure come from incessant production without acquisition. The dead-line comes early for those who fail to acquire and advance. The really useful and great men of any generation are those whose minds and characters are active in acquisition and growing larger in outlook and sympathy. But a useless old age is also seen where there is much import and a failure to export.

A paragraph of the Associated Press matter is going the rounds of the papers stating that Dr. Charles E. Hewitt, of the University of Chicago Divinity School, said to his theological students last week that "graft has taken possession of the Christian ministry," that "ministers neglect their religious duties and use their position for financial gains by questionable methods." "Dr. Hewitt decried the prevalence of graft among religious leaders as a chief cause for the deficiency in the ministry of to-day and a menace to the spread of religion." Perhaps a large proportion of intelligent people in America know that Chicago University is seriously discredited by the constant flow of absurd and erratic sentiments and statements emanating from its professors. If Mr. Roosevelt ever became President of that University, as has been suggested, he will either dismiss these men, or find a lid with which to suppress them. In all the range of our information about ministers in this country, we have heard no charge or suspicion of this kind. Certainly there is no foundation for it in the South, however it may be in the section about Chicago.